

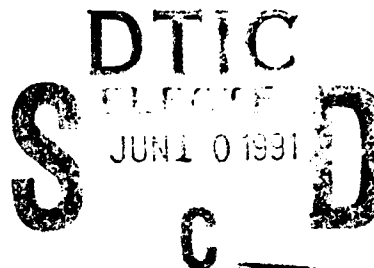
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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.



THE U.S. NAVY'S ROLE IN JOINT TASK FORCE (JTF)  
COUNTERNARCOTICS OPERATIONS:  
"Mission Impossible" or "A Recipe for Success"?

by

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The contents of the paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy

Signature: Richard E. Hagy II

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<p>Title XI of the National Defense Authorization Act for 1989 assigned the Department of Defense responsibility to coordinate the detection and monitoring tenants of U.S. counternarcotics operations. After 18 months of joint detection, monitoring, and interdiction, coordinated through DoD's Joint Task Force (JTF), the results have been dispiriting at best. The U.S. Navy as the principle maritime/air detection and monitoring tenant has experienced problems with interoperability (technical equipment and operational methodology), intelligence hoarding, training, and parochialism amongst the various counternarcotics agencies.. This paper highlights DoD's initial concerns about counternarcotics missions, limitations imposed by the Posse Comitatus Act, and discusses the U.S. Navy's role in JTF detection and monitoring operations. This paper concentrates primarily on inter-departmental interoperability issues which affect the JTF's ability to</p>			
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effectively coordinate detection, monitoring and interdictions in the CINCLANT area of responsibility (AOR). Emphasizing the special role played by the U.S. Navy in these operations due to its unique ability to provide large numbers of flexible detection and monitoring equipment (ships and aircraft), the paper discusses long range training considerations for the U.S. Navy based on the premise of a protracted war on drugs. In light of formal mission tasking given to DoD, this paper does not discuss the appropriateness of U.S. military involvement in counternarcotics operations. Finally, the paper concludes by acknowledging that the U.S. Navy has not been assigned an impossible mission although, counternarcotics detection and monitoring operations as they are currently coordinated is certainly not a recipe for success. As the paper points out, most problems can be resolved by enforcing the National Drug Control Strategy through an inter-departmental chain-of-command which has the authority to direct the utilization of limited assets intelligently and effectively. Until that time interoperability problems will continue to plague all efforts at establishing an effective detection, monitoring and interdiction program.

## **Abstract of**

### **THE U.S. NAVY'S ROLE IN JOINT TASK FORCE (JTF) COUNTERNARCOTICS OPERATIONS**

Title XI of the National Defense Authorization Act for 1989 assigned the Department of Defense responsibility to coordinate the detection and monitoring tenants of U.S. counternarcotics operations. After 18 months of joint detection, monitoring, and interdiction, coordinated through DoD's Joint Task Force (JTF), the results have been dispiriting at best. The U.S. Navy as the principle maritime/air detection and monitoring tenant has experienced problems with interoperability (technical equipment and operational methodology), intelligence hoarding, training, and parochialism amongst the various counternarcotics agencies.. This paper highlights DoD's initial concerns about counternarcotics missions, limitations imposed by the Posse Comitatus Act, and discusses the U.S. Navy's role in JTF detection and monitoring operations. Written to support curricula requirements in the Operations Department at the Naval War College, this paper concentrates primarily on inter-departmental interoperability issues which affect the JTF's ability to effectively coordinate detection, monitoring and interdictions in the CINCLANT area of responsibility (AOR). Emphasizing the special role played by the U.S. Navy in these operations due to its unique ability to provide large numbers of flexible detection and monitoring equipment (ships and aircraft), the paper discusses long range training considerations for the U.S. Navy based on the premise of a protracted war on drugs. In light of formal mission tasking given to DoD, this paper does not discuss the appropriateness of U.S. military involvement in counternarcotics operations. Finally, the paper concludes by acknowledging that the U.S. Navy has not been assigned an impossible mission although, counternarcotics detection and monitoring operations as they are currently coordinated is certainly not a recipe for success. As the paper points out, most problems can be resolved by enforcing the National Drug Control Strategy through an inter-departmental chain-of-command which has the authority to direct the utilization of limited assets intelligently and effectively. Until that time interoperability problems will continue to plague all efforts at establishing an effective detection, monitoring and interdiction program.

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**The U.S. Navy's Role in Counternarcotics Operations:  
Mission Impossible or A Recipe for Success?**

**CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION**

**The Department of Defense is an enthusiastic participant in the nation's drug control effort and can make a substantial contribution if its assets are used intelligently and efficiently.<sup>1</sup> -- Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney**

In the course of the following chapters, we will look at the mission given to both the Department of Defense (DoD) and the U.S. Navy as it applies to counternarcotics operations. We will review the specific mission assigned to the U.S. Navy, discuss specific areas of operations in which the navy is involved, and scrutinize some of the problems associated with that mission. To that end, I think it is important for us to understand the principle tenants of the National Drug Control Strategy if ultimately we are to evaluate the effectiveness of the U.S. Navy's efforts. Therefore, Chapter 2 is dedicated to describing the role that DoD plays in the National Drug Control Strategy, and DoD's position on the various degrees of U.S. military involvement as it affects military preparedness. Following the discussion of the DoD mission, we will look specifically at U.S. Navy counternarcotics operations, the forces utilized to complete the mission, and some problems associated with effective mission accomplishment. Finally, we will examine the effectiveness of mission accomplishment as applied to National Drug Control Strategy, and explore some future considerations based on the premise of a protracted war on drugs.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **DoD's MISSION**

**"The American people consider drugs the number one problem facing the United States."<sup>1</sup> - Secretary of State Baker, 20 February 1990**

**"We recognize that military involvement in this mission has costs, and that in a world of finite resources increased effort here is at the expense of other important defense activities. We accept the tradeoffs, and we will do the job"<sup>2</sup> - President Bush in National Security Strategy of the United States- March 1990**

The FY 1989 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA 89) gave the Department of Defense broader responsibilities in the conduct of counternarcotics operations. First, the department was assigned responsibility as the lead agency of the federal government for the detection and monitoring of illegal drugs transiting into the United States, encompassing both aerial and maritime movement. Second, the department was tasked with integrating the command, control, communications, and technical intelligence capabilities of the various United States agencies participating in the interdiction of illegal drugs.<sup>3</sup> A mission which involves coordinating the efforts of over thirty different governmental drug and law enforcement agencies. The act also increased the role of the National Guard, in that it allows the guard to support state drug interdiction and law enforcement operations while operating under the direction of the state governors.

However, DoD's assignment as the lead agency in the detection and monitoring of illicit narcotics into the United States is only one tenant of the President's National Drug Control Strategy which addresses each of the production, supply and demand elements associated with illicit drug control. Specifically, the strategy delineates five principle areas of concern; consumption, illicit production, treatment, rehabilitation, and trafficking.

Within the confines of the National Drug Control Strategy, DoD and more specifically the U.S. Navy, is principally concerned with detection, monitoring and interdiction assistance (trafficking) of illegal drugs across the U.S. southern border. Prior to the NDAA 89 the U.S. Navy's role in counternarcotics



operations was limited to providing periodic assistance to various law enforcement agencies as the navy deemed assets were available.

Although the NDAA 89 assigned DoD primary responsibility for coordinating the detection and monitoring of narcotics trafficking operations, their success in this effort depends heavily on cooperation from other U.S. governmental agencies. This coordination/cooperation is particularly essential in most interdiction operations occurring on either the high seas, or in or near foreign littoral air/sea territories and economic zones. It involves the ability to detect and monitor ships and aircraft departing, or in transit from one country and coordinating an interdiction operation within the international boundaries of another. It requires support from U.S. embassy country teams and presumes the support of drug interdiction efforts by the host country. As stated by Secretary of Defense Cheney, "A sustained multinational effort is essential to stemming the flow illegal drugs from abroad."<sup>4</sup> In essence, without close cooperation and coordination between DoD, DoS, DoJ, DoT (USCG) personnel, and strong international support from all of the Central/South American governments, mission effectiveness is in jeopardy. President Bush states, "the cornerstone of our international effort is to work with and motivate other countries to help defeat the illicit drug trade...."<sup>5</sup>

As previously mentioned, the National Drug Control Strategy calls for an attack on the drug problem in five different areas. It emphasizes that the interdiction tenant is not a panacea for the nations drug problem, and that programs designed to decrease production and demand are equally important. To that end, agencies participating in the National Drug Control Strategy have assigned unequal priorities to their respective areas of involvement.

To further explain the potential concern for differences in agency priorities, consider the following statement by Secretary of State Baker to the United Nations when he said that "attacking the problem of domestic consumption is our most critical challenge."<sup>6</sup> Immediately one sees a significant difference between State and Defense Department priorities. To what degree, if any, is this an abdication of DoS's responsibility to coerce foreign governments to stop the flow of illicit frugs from their countries? Strangely enough, "as legislatied by congress, it is the U.S. Department of State, through it's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters (INM), that has overall responsibility for America's drug war overseas."<sup>7</sup> The point being that, although each of the

nations departments is pursuing the ultimate goal of eradicating the nation's drug problem, dissimilar priorities in times of austere funding has the potential to equate to inequitable funding of joint programs. Furthermore, in the recent past differences in inter-agency methodology and priorities has created appreciable problems with coordination and joint operations.<sup>8</sup>

Having briefly mentioned the U.S. Navy's mission as one of detection, monitoring, and interdiction assistance let's briefly describe some legal limitations associated with the aforementioned mission.

Due to legislation known as the *Posse Comitatus* Act, the U.S. military is prohibited from being utilized to enforce civilian laws unless expressly authorized by an act of congress. "Although the prohibitions against the use of the military as a *posse comitatus* had earlier been interpreted to apply to only the Army and Air Force, subsequent legislation has made it clear that the restrictions apply to the Navy and Marines as well."<sup>9</sup> The Act currently exists as section 1385 of Title 18 of the United States Code (USC). Enacted in 1879, the act was originally intended to end the use of the military to "police state elections in ex-Confederate states where civil power had been reestablished."<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the military has been used in the past to assist civilian law enforcement agencies and on occasion conduct law enforcement activity. However, when utilized, past military committal to law enforcement activities has generally been in response to crisis or disaster related events. For example, to control civil rights and urban rioting in the 1950's and 1960's or in response to natural disasters.<sup>11</sup> In essence, the prohibition imposed by the posse comitatus act has not been interpreted by congress to be absolute. In fact, in 1985 congressional legislation overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives which would have modified the Posse Comitatus Act and granted the U.S. military authority to arrest illicit drug traffickers. Only vehement objections by defense officials and a couple key senators kept the legislation from passing in the Senate.<sup>12</sup> The official military objection was for the most part centered around the problem of having military personnel involved in post arrest court proceedings, thereby taking them away from their service responsibilities and degrading preparedness (training and readiness) to fight. However, a second remonstrance was founded on the military's perception that this was not their

job. After all the U.S. Navy had no counternarcotics mission, it only assisted other agencies in counternarcotics operations, this was a Coast Guard, Customs, DEA, and FBI dilemma. In short, this was a law enforcement and not a military problem. To quote then Secretary of Defense Carlucci, "Our military doesn't want to do it. If they had wanted to be law enforcement people, they would have gone into police work."<sup>13</sup> This resistance to provide assets helped to kindle an atmosphere that led congress to enact the NDAA 89.

In addition, to further amplify administration resolve and curb potential future resistance from DoD, specific counternarcotics missions were assigned to DoD in both the President's National Security Strategy and his National Drug Control Strategy. In the aftermath DoD and the U.S. Navy had an official counternarcotics mission. As a result of this Presidential mandate, one would assume that fundamental changes in naval mission prioritization would be forthcoming.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **NAVAL COUNTERNARCOTICS OPERATIONS**

In order to fully appreciate the counternarcotics tasking assigned the U.S. Navy, we must remember that the Secretary of Defense has correctly directed DoD components to integrate their efforts in the war on drugs with those of a myriad of other governmental counternarcotics agencies. As such the role that the U.S. Navy plays is tied inextricably to a complex multi-departmental effort where the success of any counternarcotics operations will be dependent on the ability of the various participants to work together with unity of purpose.

In order to help coordinate the detection and monitoring efforts of the various departmental counternarcotics agencies, DoD created a special Joint Task Force(JTF). The U.S. Navy is unquestionably the largest single DoD contributor to the maritime/aerial detection and monitoring effort of the JTF (the USAF provides a significant number of airplanes, but no ships). While providing ships, planes and their associated personnel to the detection and monitoring effort, the navy concurrently allows the USCG to station personnel aboard those ships from which they conduct maritime interdiction. Therefore when we discuss DoD's detection, monitoring, and interdiction assistance missions, it is to a large extent the U.S. Navy that is the principal provider and coordinator of joint operations for the DoD. Having said that, let's look at the tasking given DoD as a result of the National Defense Authorization Act of 1989:

"... develop the capability to conduct effective nighttime surveillance and monitoring of the southern border using a combination of: (1) Land, sea, and air-based radar; (2) aircraft capable of monitoring the flight of potential drug smugglers; and (3) integrated communications with the law enforcement agencies that will make the actual searches, seizures, and arrests."<sup>1</sup>

In the fall of 1989, at the direction of the Secretary of Defense (SoD), and under the purview of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) the staffing of a joint service task force began. The SoD sent letters to the commanders-in-chief (CINC's) of the unified and specified commands informing them that reduction of the flow of drugs into the United States was now a high-priority national

security mission and further directed them to elevate this mission's priority in their areas of responsibility.<sup>2</sup> The directive went on to assign particular priority in this mission to the Atlantic, Pacific, Southern and North American Air Defense Commands (now CINCSpace). Forces Command was later added to coordinate interdiction efforts along the Mexican border (Table 2). The Navy's role began to take shape as USLANTCOM and USPACOM started staffing two new joint service task forces, one in Key West, FL (JTF-4) responsible for counternarcotics operations in the CINCLANT AOR and the other in Alameda, CA (JTF-5) responsible for operations in the CINCPAC AOR. The two CINCs took the responsibility for ensuring that their naval components provided the ships, planes, personnel and other assets that could be spared for the drug interdiction mission.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, neither of these two fledgling JTF's were provided enough dedicated ships or planes to adequately carry out their detection and monitoring responsibilities. Assets provided by the navy "continued to be ships and planes on other missions."<sup>4</sup> Similarly the U.S. Coast Guard who also provides ships and aircraft to the joint interdiction effort routinely assigned their less capable units to the JTF.<sup>5</sup> In order to appreciate the U.S. Navy's current level of commitment to drug interdiction operations, an estimate provided by former Secretary of Defense Carlucci to Congress in June 1988, listed the ships and aircraft required to halt the unlawful penetration of the southern border by vessels and aircraft carrying illegal narcotics. Table 1.

Within the past 8 months the navy has routinely provided JTF-4 between 4-8 ships (including an aircraft carrier), and 10-20 land-based surveillance aircraft, although developments in the Persian Gulf have obviously affected the types and number of ships available for most recent drug interdiction operations<sup>6</sup>.

On the average, most U.S. Navy ships are assigned to JTF-4 for a period between 30-40 days, a duration which, when one considers the proverbial learning curve, may seem rather short to some. Some naval experts minimize the learning curve effect pointing out that USCG Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDET's) which embark on most U.S. Navy ships conducting counternarcotics operations, can help to overcome any training or experience shortfalls.

**Table 1. Secretary of Defense Carlucci's estimate of U.S. military ships and aircraft required to halt penetration of the southern border by vessels and aircraft carrying illegal narcotics.**

**Ships**

CG, DD/DDG, FF/FFG, PHM, AO, AFS, AOR

Total- 99 ships (93 combatants and 6 logistics ships) required to support 25 units continuously on station.

Subdivided- 25 combatants on station: Pacific 3; Gulf 12; Atlantic 5; Choke points 5.

**Aircraft**

E-3's- 25 aircraft supporting 5 orbits ( total of 34 aircraft in USAF inventory at the time)

OR

E-2's- 48 aircraft supporting 6 orbits (total of 98 aircraft in USN inventory at the time with only 71 operational)

OR

Some mix of E-3's and E-2's.

Source: Simon. Appendix 2.

Note: The figures provided in Figure 1 may be somewhat inflated, in that, former Secretary Carlucci was vehemently opposed to U.S. military participation in counternarcotics operations, and may have overestimated force requirements in order to make the option of using the military less attractive. On the other hand, these figures only address forces required to interdict illicit drug flow into the the United States from it's southern border and do not account for smugglers changing transit routes in response to U.S. interdiction efforts. To be sure the numbers seem overwhelmingly large in light of the forces committed to drug interdiction efforts today.

During most recent operations an aircraft carrier has been assigned to the JTF-4. An excellent C<sup>3</sup> platform, the carrier serves as the flagship for a Battle Group Commander (CJTG 4.1) who coordinates Caribbean counternarcotics detection and monitoring operations. Both the carrier and the Battle Group Commander are usually assigned to the JTF for approximately 45 days. The fact that former Secretary Carlucci's assessment did not delineate the use of an aircraft carrier and it's associated air wing somewhat narrows the the

differences between the estimates of 1988 and the resources utilized today. One might question however, whether an aircraft carrier makes all the difference.

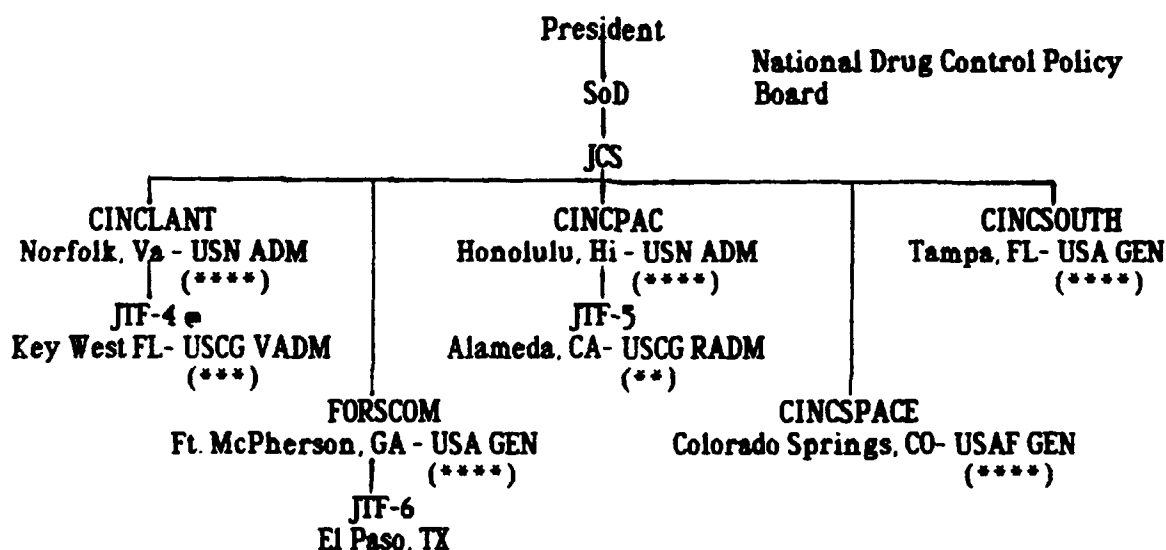
As previously alluded to, during the fall of 1990 the U.S. Navy began to dedicate capital ships (carriers and cruisers) to the drug interdiction mission. Aircraft carriers laden with airborne early warning, fighter, and other surveillance aircraft, as well as state-of-the-art cruisers (AEGIS) with the most sophisticated of radar systems were provided to the JTF in support of the detection and monitoring efforts. In addition, USCG LEDET's are embarked on most every U.S. Navy ship assigned counternarcotics operations. However, interoperability problems continue to saturate efforts at conducting smooth and efficient detection and monitoring operations. Not interoperability problems within the naval infrastructure but rather between the airborne/seaborne detection and monitoring assets and law enforcement interdiction agencies ashore.

Integration of USAF, USCG, DEA, and U.S. Customs ships/boats, and aircraft into a coordinated detection, monitoring and interdiction grid is a complex problem. Table 3 provides a general list of the types of assets provided to the JTF by the key interdiction agencies. Actually there are "fourteen US agencies with responsibilities for countering seaborne drug trafficking."<sup>7</sup> Although the coordination/cooperation problem would be significantly diminished if the assets were owned by one agency, such is not case. Differences in mission priorities, operational methodology, unit capabilities and limitations, and "turf" parochialism present the JTF staff appreciable problems. Isn't it ironic that prior the NDAA 89 Navy officials routinely dragged their feet when asked to support counternarcotics operations, and now in a similar fashion many law enforcement agencies (who have their own drug interdiction agenda) are providing the Navy a dose of their own medicine.

From its very inception the JTF has recognized that a unified command, control, communications, and intelligence (C<sup>3</sup>I) network is pivotal to the effective employment of the dissimilar assets and divergent operational methodologies of the various agencies involved. In short, without effective C<sup>3</sup>I it will be impossible to successfully adapt to drug runners who "constantly shift their operations to keep one step ahead of observation and capture."<sup>8</sup> Today one of the biggest problems with interdiction is the ability of smugglers

to outsmart and evade law enforcement agencies. The innovativeness of today's drug runners is astounding, their intelligence networks monitor U.S. government movements and often know when radar-surveillance aircraft or ships have changed positions. Subsequently they will change their routes or suspend shipments until the "coast is clear." Stephen H. Greene, former deputy assistant administrator for operations at DEA remarked, "All we do is raise the cost of business to them, which becomes a pass along cost to the user."<sup>9</sup>

Table 2. DoD Joint Drug Control Organization.



• - Some consideration is being given to changing JTF-4 to a Navy command.

Although C<sup>3</sup>I has improved significantly over the first two years, problems with equipment compatibility, operational flexibility, and intelligence sharing continue to plague JTF coordination efforts. For example, a relatively new C<sup>3</sup>I system known as the Joint Maritime Information Element (JMIE) is being developed by the USCG and USCS which will link as many as 67 stations in agencies in and around the US. At present, this new system is not designed to be integrated with the real-time data link information being provided by U.S. Navy maritime and air surveillance assets without requiring manual data transfer between the two systems. Assigning capital ships to the JTF (aircraft carriers, AEGIS cruisers, and in the future large amphibious ships) is due in



part to their superior C<sup>3</sup> capabilities. Not to be taken lightly, these ships and their associated aircraft can provide real-time detection data to shore nodes, which in turn, when appropriate, can coordinate an interdiction. As previously alluded to, herein lies the rub. It is the transition from detection and monitoring to interdiction that is most often criticized.

On a more positive note, DoD has provided use of the Caribbean Basin Radar Network (CBRN) to fight the war on drugs. There are presently plans to integrate multi-source radar data into a tracking system which processes and displays information collected from the CBRN, aerostats, and a variety of airborne early-warning aircraft (USAF E-3 AWACS, USN E-2C, and USCS P-3AEW's). Obviously not every maritime or air contact detected is smuggling drugs, however, every detection is considered intelligence. This intelligence must be available for evaluation instantaneously at C<sup>3</sup>I shore nodes in order to effect a smooth transition between detection and monitoring efforts and interdiction.

JTF-4 and JTF-5 are principally concerned with drug trafficking that is occurring between South/Central America and the United States. Relying heavily on intelligence in order to effectively position limited assets, the organizations concentrate their assets off the coast of South/Central America and in the Caribbean. Due to the dissimilar missions of the various intergovernmental agencies involved in counternarcotics operations, and the fact that many counternarcotics operations occur outside of the JTF umbrella, a comprehensive intelligence sharing network is absolutely critical to joint operations.

Presently, JTF operations rely on the technical equipment capabilities of Navy ships, as well as their ability to remain on station for long periods of time. The latter factor is due principally to the U.S. Navy's profficiency at refueling, replenishing and conducting repairs at sea.

**Table 3. JTF-4/5 Key Maritime/Air Detection and Monitoring Assets.**

<u>USN</u>	<u>USCG</u>	<u>USCS</u>	<u>USAF</u>
<u>Air</u>			
*CV- air wing (at sea) (80-100 aircraft)	**Aerostats (5)	*P-3 AEW (2)	*E-3 AWACS (1)
*E-2 (land based) (2-4)	*HU-25's	*P-3 Slicks (2)	
*S-3's/P-3's (4-8)	*HH-65A	*Cessna Citation II (16)	
*H-3/H-2/H-60 (4-6)	*C-130	*Piper Cheyenne III (8)	
		*BK-117 Helicopter (2)	

Surface

<u>USN</u>	<u>USCG</u>
* CG (various including AEGIS)	*210' cutter
*DD/DDG	**WMEC cutter
*FF/FFG	**WHEC cutter
*PHM	
*AO, AOR, AFS	

\* Denotes assets dedicated to JTF detection, monitoring and interdiction operations.

\* Denotes assets controlled by law enforcement agency, occasionally utilized to assist in JTF operations.

Note: Number in ( ) indicates total assets owned by agency

Ships conducting detection and monitoring operations are assigned a strategic area of the ocean to patrol, in essence creating a surface and air radar grid/network. Using historical information on drug trafficking routes, supplemented by most recent intelligence, ships and aircraft are repositioned

to most effectively construct this radar network. The flexibility, endurance, and C<sup>3</sup> capabilities of naval assets allow the navy to react almost instantaneously to updated intelligence, either by moving units to a new surveillance area or looking for detections in a particular sector. Obviously, due to asset limitations it is impossible to cover every square inch of ocean with radar. Therefore the positioning of assets becomes a critical component in the detection and monitoring equation. Considering the expanse of ocean that must be monitored and the limited assets available, one can see how the grid begins to fall apart if ships should leave their station. In effect unless replaced, this creates a "hole" through which drug traffickers could evade detection. On occasion ships are assigned to JTF duties that cannot remain on station as scheduled, and the entire coordination problem becomes doubly complicated. Such is the case with the U.S. Coast Guard 210' class cutter which until recently was assigned to the JTF for the aforementioned mission. These vessels soon received criticism from some naval personnel because they were incapable of refueling or conducting anything but the simplest of repairs at sea.<sup>10</sup> Once again the upshot was differences in operational methodology. The Navy is accustomed to ferrying technicians from ship to ship in order to effect repairs at sea and thereby allowing the ship to remain in its assigned surveillance area. Coast Guard operations on the other hand do not stress maintaining the same level of profficiency in these areas. Repairs are normally conducted in port and only the larger cutters routinely train at refueling, or replenishing at sea. These types of integration problems have been highlighted in recent post operation "lessons learned" discussions. In this instance the 270' class cutter has a greater at sea refueling capability, so part of the problem is solved by assigning 270' vice 210' Class cutters to JTF operations.<sup>11</sup>

Consider the following statement from a senior DEA official, "The CIA and the military have spent 10 years trying to find one goddam hostage in Lebanon"... What makes them think they can, "solve the dope problem?"<sup>12</sup> Combine that with the fact that the military personnel staffing the JTF continue to experience inter-agency turf wars and parochialism<sup>13</sup>, and it doesn't take much to recognize that a mission as complex as counternarcotics cannot succeed with this level of intolerance occurring amongst government agencies. In fact, it is not uncommon to see several agencies off doing their

own thing, to the point that attempts at coordinating simple surveillance schemes become almost unresolvable. Coordination issues that are usually easily resolved within the military infrastructure become almost impossible to solve because the military doesn't own the assets. For example, to date, some law enforcement agencies still do not provide the JTF information on clandestine operations thereby creating situations where valuable time and assets are wasted monitoring or intercepting friendly ships or aircraft.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, the U.S. Navy and U.S. military in general can be very restrictive in the area of intelligence sharing, especially if releasing information could compromise a classified source.

Another problem affecting the navy with respect to its mission in joint counternarcotics operations is the lack of any routine joint counternarcotics training. Because of the additional costs associated with establishing and then conducting a training program, this issue was originally used as an argument against U.S. Navy participation in counternarcotics operations. However, in light of the fact that the U.S. Navy now has an official counternarcotics mission, those individuals should reevaluate their position, in that, formal training is a necessary adjunct to a formal mission. Initial efforts at coordinating the use of multi-agency forces in the detection, monitoring, and interdiction of illicit drugs have been dismal at best. Although the Navy has been assigned a mission to conduct counternarcotics operations, ships do not conduct routine training in counternarcotics operations. Naval ships are usually assigned to the JTF with little to no formal predeployment counternarcotics unit training and absolutely no integrated joint agency training. Although most ships do get USCG briefings prior to leaving for dedicated counternarcotics operations, this is significantly different from the extensive warfare training routinely administered and monitored as a part of a ship's daily routine.

The aforementioned notwithstanding, this issue should not be over emphasized. In fact, the amount and level of counternarcotics training needed is minuscule when compared to primary warfare or damage control training a ship conducts. The primary objective should be to give the crews of our ships and aircraft opportunities in port, where the routine is more conducive to dedicated training and the environment is relatively benign, to digest the entire breadth of their impending operations. Since it appears that long term prospects for naval participation in counternarcotics operations is inevitable,

then at the very least the organization of a Mobile Training Team (MTT) to assist in predeployment counternarcotics work-ups seems appropriate. Training in threat identification, special rules of engagement, C<sup>3</sup>I, prize crew operations and interdiction assistance should be conducted weeks prior to deploying for JTF operations. Furthermore, the U.S. Navy should consider establishing minimum qualifications for key personnel which may by necessity become involved in prize crew or interdiction assistance operations.

In conclusion, several key issues come to mind. It serves little purpose to detect and monitor illicit trafficking if it cannot be effectively interdicted at some point. In addition, it is a waste of time, money, and limited assets to detect, monitor or interdict our own guys. The reality is that we have limited assets dedicated to detection and monitoring, and the U.S. Navy depends heavily on intelligence to effectively position ships and aircraft. Without a cooperatively shared intelligence network between the various counternarcotics participants the effectiveness of U.S. Navy detection and monitoring efforts is significantly hampered. Furthermore, "joint" planning, "joint" training, and "joint" post operations skull sessions between the various participants must be functional methods whereby agency conflicts can be resolved. In essence, major reform of the counternarcotics bureaucracy is essential in order for the United States to carry out an effective antidrug strategy.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It seems although the U.S. Navy has made significant strides in resolving initial naval asset allocation problems, that inter-agency integration and coordination problems continue to present a significant deterrent to effective "joint" interdiction efforts. This not to say that the individual agencies involved in drug interdiction have not reduced the flow of illicit drugs into the United States, but that the cooperation requirements implied in the "joint" interdiction mission has been dismally mediocre. Many problems with the Joint Task Force and ultimately U.S. Navy operations stem from a lack of cooperation amongst the myriad of inter-departmental agencies involved, and is further aggravated by their inability to resolve intelligence sharing dilemmas. More than a coordination problem, one answer is to "clarify organizational support and operations responsibilities in Washington."<sup>1</sup> Someone must have the authority to direct vice request support from the various participants. Some critics of the current structure suggest that control "must be at the highest national level.", and "that any governmental level below the National Security Council (NSC) will not be able to compel major U.S. agency players to get their houses in order."<sup>2</sup> Another suggestion is to "reposition the Office of National Drug Control Policy within the Justice Department and to subordinate the director under the attorney general. As a member of the cabinet and as the senior law enforcement official in the United States, with control over prosecutors, FBI and DEA, the attorney has the bureaucratic resources legal power and political position to properly coordinate US antidrug efforts."<sup>3</sup> Although law enforcement "turf battles" may diminish, this second option does not solve the problem of inter-departmental conflicts. Let's understand one thing, most law enforcement agencies conduct the larger portion of their drug enforcement activities outside of the JTF umbrella. Attempts over the past 18 months to centralize intelligence networks, in order to further focus drug interdiction efforts has been dispiriting. Quite possibly 18 months is not long enough for such a complex integration to materialize. In fact, there are programs in place that are supposed to resolve the very issues being discussed. Unfortunately

with respect to JTF counternarcotics operations, no one agency or department has the authority to prioritize the myriad of recurring counternarcotics problems. Furthermore, no one organization has the authority to direct the employment of the various law enforcement assets in support of future "joint" drug interdiction efforts. DoD is responsible for the coordination of detection and monitoring, but has no authority to force cooperation. The entire success of most law enforcement agencies hinges on how many busts they get. To that end they each have their own intra-agency counternarcotics agenda, and to a certain extent do no more than pay the JTF "lip service" unless they expect to be the agency making the bust. As such, in the future, the JTF can expect cooperation when an agency can afford to cooperate without impacting their own operations. In addition, the parochialism, intelligence hoarding, and turf battles that we are now experiencing will continue until someone is given the authority to prioritize missions and direct compliance of the agencies involved. In essence there is no unified counternarcotics strategy, nor is there an operationally effective chain-of-command (from the military perspective). Once a unified and prioritized strategy has been developed the U.S. Navy will have to reevaluate the prioritization of its own operations.

The U.S. Navy's present mission is certainly not an impossible one. It is certainly within the capability of the U.S. Navy to effectively detect and monitor air and maritime traffick between South/Central America and the United States. However, recently there have been indications that drugs may be leaving South/Central America for Europe and then returning to the United States. The present area of operations is already thought by many to be larger than the limited sea/air-borne assets can handle effectively. The Caribbean alone encompasses an area of over 750,000 sq mi. If at some future date we must patrol the entire east and west coast where will the assets come from?

The cooperation/coordination exhibited to date between the various US counternarcotics organizations is certainly no example of a "recipe for success." Between DoD's tracking abilities and better intelligence obtained from all sources, the United States has the resources to be able to pull its limited counternarcotics assets in closer to the nation's coasts.<sup>4</sup> For DoD and the U.S. Navy, the "danger (in this mission) is clear. With the Pentagon aggressively courting new roles and missions in the anti-narcotics effort, the public may

come increasingly to blame it for failures in a conflict that the armed services (alone) are ultimately unable to influence decisively."5



## **NOTES**

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### **Chapter II**

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#### **CHAPTER IV**

1. Hazlewood, and Messing, P. 153.
2. August G. Jannarone, and Ray E. Stratton, "Toward an Integrated United States Strategy for Counternarcotics and Counterinsurgency", p. 123.
3. Randy J. Kolton, "Combating the Columbian Drug Cartels." Military Review, March 1990, p. 61.
4. Charles M Fuss Jr, "Lies, Damn Lies, Statistics, and the Drug War." Proceedings, December 1989, p. 69.
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